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Faculty Senate Minutes

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Faculty Senate Minutes - April 10, 2015

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
Cook Library 123/Fleming Education Center 301
April 10, 2015

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): M. Alford (D. Beckett), J. Anderson, T. Barry (S. Reischman-Fletcher), A. Beck, D. Booth (D. Fletcher), R. Buchanan (O. Harvey), S. Cloud, K. Davis, D. Fletcher, D. Griffin, R. Griffitt, A. Haley, B. Harbaugh, O. Harvey, B. Hayden, S. Hayden, F. Heitmuller, D. Holt, S. Hrostowski, L. Iglesias, J. Lambers (S. Hrostowski), M. Leonard, M. Lux, H. Lyn, C. Meyers, E. Molaison, C. Miller, L. Neelis, W. Odom, J. Olmi, R. Press (J. Anderson), P. Price, L. Rackoff, S. Reischman-Fletcher, T. C. Sirola, S. Rouse, K. Shelley, C. Tardy (S. Venette), M. Van Norden (K. Zantow), T. Welsh, J. White, K. Zantow

Guests: Bill Powell, Becky Malley, Paul Walters, Linda Rasmussen

- 1.0 The meeting was called to order by Sec. Anderson at 2:02 PM.
 - 2.0 The agenda was approved by Sec. Anderson without objection.
 - 3.0 The March minutes were approved as presented by Sec. Anderson without objection.
 - 4.0 Officer Reports
 - 4.1 Secretary Anderson (Presiding Officer) thanked the senate committees for their work and dedication to the senate. She also announced that resolutions would be put forth by Academics and Governance and that resolutions from other committees are forthcoming.
- Sec. Anderson also reported that the results of the first round of senate elections have come in. No one in any of the colleges/divisions received at least 50% of the vote, so a second round is going forward. That ballot will be sent out next week. Participation was low, about 40%.
- Sec. Anderson also reported that our senate president wishes to adjourn the May meeting during May rather than June and took a straw poll to indicate objection. Objections were raised.
- Sec. Anderson also reminded the senate that officer elections are to be held in May. The Executive Committee has been engaging in discussions regarding elections. Many have been participating in discussions as well. The elections of senate officers should always be taken seriously, but this year, the elections are especially important. Now that the senate president sits on the President's cabinet, we should be especially dutiful to the senate and to the faculty at large to elect a person who not only is agreeable to serve but who exhibits strong leadership traits. Shared governance is not only a spirit but a practice. We must not only identify problems but create solutions through collaboration and cooperation with our university administrators. That can be tricky, and we need a leader who has the ability to navigate an office that is oft faced with uncertainty and sometimes even adversity. Finally, Sec. Anderson announced a reminder that the senate will elect a President to a one-year term to fill the office vacated by Lachel Story. The senate will also elect a President-Elect and a Secretary-Elect during the elections. If a senator

intends to nominate a candidate, you are free to announce your intentions on the list-serv.

Sec. Anderson then went over highlights of Pres. Press' report (full report presented via email and included below).

New officers. My thanks to Senators who have worked hard this academic year on key issues facing USM. It is important that the Executive Committee continue to work closely with Committee Chairs, and they in turn with their Committees to produce practical and important resolutions. The officers must make every effort to represent the sentiment of the Senate and, when possible, the faculty at large.

Budget cuts: The Deans were asked to come up with proposed cuts of up to 4.5% and have done so. The cuts are likely to include some currently unfilled staff and faculty positions.

Pay raises: The legislature has approved funds for pay raises for faculty and staff. IHL will determine how the money will be apportioned, but the amount is in the range of 2.5%. Merit is a critical factor but the Senate Executive Committee proposed a portion of the funds be directed toward 'compression' raises and that the Provost be involved.

Smoking ban proposal of SGA: The vote on a total ban on smoking got about a 25% negative and 75% positive vote from faculty, staff, and students. The Senate has not taken a position, but a compromise could be to adopt the SGA proposals but allow several strategically-located and sheltered smoking structures.

Dead Week proposal of SGA. While most Senators and other faculty seem in favor of the principle, some details remain to be agreed upon. The Senate has taken no vote on the SGA proposal. Discussions with the SGA leadership may be held on details.

Parking/Access. There has been concerns expressed about the CFO's proposal that everyone pay an 'access' fee but there is also some support for the proposal.

Enrollment. The President has made increasing quality and quantity of students a priority, along with increasing transfer and general enrollment.

Sexual assaults at USM. Education and Psychology will follow up an earlier survey with a new survey to try to determine the scope of sexual assaults on campus. Welfare and Environment committee chair Susan Hrostowski is considering action plans to enlist faculty in addressing this issue in practical ways.

Accusations of sexual misbehavior: The Committee on Welfare and Environment has held conversations with the USM Title IX officer who today will explain her role and respond to Senator's questions, including both formal and informal representation of anyone accused of sexual misbehavior.

4.2 Secretary-elect Welsh had no report.

1.0 Remarks from Administration

Minutes of the Meeting
Of the Faculty Senate
April 10, 2015

5.1 Provost Denis Wiesenburg

Prov. Wiesenburg reported that the proposed 4.5% cuts are going forward with every college. There will be a number of faculty positions unfilled (about 40), which was the only option. This will result in about \$6.79 million in cuts (\$4.68 million from academic affairs and \$2.11 million from administration). A significant part of the money (about \$1.8 million) will go to the reserve fund that will be used to build programs that show growth.

IHL will mandate that the raises be merit-based but each university will be given some flexibility. The provost then took questions.

2.0 Guests: Becky Malley, Paul Walters, and Linda Rasmussen

Sec. Anderson asked Sen. Hrostowski, Chair of the Welfare and Environmental Concerns Committee, to introduce the guests. Sen. Hrostowski stated that in the fall there was discussion about due process for faculty accused of sexual misconduct so we invited Rebecca Malley, Title IX Coordinator; Paul Walters, Director of the Office of Compliance; and Linda Rasmussen, Director of the Affirmative Action & Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

Dr. Malley reviewed the role of Title IX Coordinator:

- Receive complaints
- Conduct initial interview
- Facilitate the investigative process (when appropriate).

She noted that the investigative process had two components

- 1) Criminal
- 2) Internal (lower standard of proof) – an administrative process to determine violation of policy.

Dr. Malley distributed copies of the USM Sexual Misconduct Procedure flowchart: <http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/sexual-misconduct/images/finalflowchart.pdf>

A sexual misconduct investigation team is composed of 16 employees (faculty and staff). Members of the team undergo a certification process and also have monthly training seminars. The team formed about 2 years ago and are a good mix of faculty, gender, age group, and ethnicity – they are people who are well-respected and can be trusted with confidential information.

Dr. Malley noted that the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requires employees who hear of evidence of sexual assault to report it to the Title IX officer (Malley).

Suggestions from faculty have been implemented:

- Complaint audit
- More user-friendly Web site
- Interface of policy with faculty (Title IX policy may conflict with Faculty Handbook)

Office of Compliance Director and Attorney Paul Walters noted that they need feedback from Faculty Senate on how OCR policy and Faculty Handbook policy could work together. If it is a sexual assault, the investigation must go forward. The standard – is this a danger to the community. Faculty senators are asked to read the OCR policies and procedures in place now and give input on what happens if faculty are found guilty of sexual misconduct. He will be sending suggestions to the Handbook Committee such as faculty violation of civil rights are not grievable.

3.0 Committee Reports

3.1 Senate Committees

3.1.1 Academics and Governance

Sen. Holt moved a resolution on faculty salary compression and inversion. After much discussion of the language, Sen. Holt rescinded his motion in order to revise and present an amended resolution at the next meeting.

3.1.2 Administrative Evaluation – No Report

3.1.3 Awards

Sen. Barry sent a message to request senators' attendance at the Faculty Awards ceremony on May 1st.

3.1.4 Bylaws

Sen. Odom reviewed two policy issues – senators' attendance and replacement. The committee recommended a senator be ousted after four absences; they would get a notice after two absences and a warning after three absences. Sen. Odom intends to put forth the bylaw amendment for vote during the May meeting.

3.1.5 Communications

Sen. Price stated that the committee was working on a faculty survey and requested faculty senators send questions or issues for the survey to the chair, Sen. Tardy.

3.1.6 Elections – No Report

3.1.7 Finance – No Report (will present next meeting)

3.1.8 Handbook

Sen. Davis asked senators to review teaching evaluation in the Faculty Handbook and send feedback.

https://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/office-provost/pdf/faculty_handbook_revised_9-2014.pdf

3.1.9 Research and Scholarship – No Report

3.1.10 Student Life – No Report

3.1.11 Teaching and Service – No Report

3.1.12 University Relations – No Report

3.1.13 University Welfare and Environmental Concerns

Sen. Hrostowski noted that a resolution that supports LGBT students and one that addresses employee assistance and mental health benefits will be placed on the listserv for review.

3.2 University Committees

3.3 Gulf Coast Faculty Council – No Report

4.0 Old Business – None

5.0 New Business

Sec. Anderson noted that the issue of meeting adjournment in May should be debated and she would ask Pres. Press to send justification for May adjournment via email.

6.0 The meeting was adjourned by Sec. Anderson at 5:01 PM with no objection.